

On September 8, 2007, veterans from Fentress County, Tennessee will be in Washington, D.C. to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This special group will be comprised of veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm.

During their visit to Washington, the first for many, they will also tour the monuments erected to honor those who have served. It is at those hallowed memorials where they will be to pay their respects to their fallen brothers and sisters.

Whether serving stateside or overseas, the men and women of America's Armed Forces embody the true spirit of what makes this country of ours so great. They have embarked on noble journeys to free many from the jaws of tyranny and oppression, usually at their own peril. They deserve our admiration, support, and appreciation.

In closing, I am humbled with the knowledge that others have paid such a steep price to give us the liberties and freedoms we all enjoy today. May God continue to look over the souls of those who have gone before us and look down at us with all his blessings.

HONORING THE CAYUGA, ELKHART, FRANKSTON, AND NECHES INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN ANDERSON COUNTY, TEXAS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor the Cayuga, Elkhart, Frankston, and Neches Independent School Districts in Anderson County, Texas for excellence in education.

Education is a fundamental part of the development of our Nation's youth. The Texas Education Agency recently released the 2007 annual performance ratings for schools across Texas. It is notable that the Cayuga, Elkhart, Frankston, and Neches Independent School Districts were able to maintain their rating of "recognized"—which is the second-highest possible rating.

Their performance illustrates the commitment and dedication of the administrators, teachers, and staff who provide students with a quality education. In particular, I would like to recognize the work of Superintendents Rick Webb, Glenn Hambrick, Austin Thacker, and Randy Snider.

Madam Speaker, as the representative for Anderson County, I would like to commend the Cayuga, Elkhart, Frankston, and Neches Independent School Districts for their continued achievements in education.

HONORING RICK CORNETT

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. TIBERI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the dedication and achievements of Mr. Rick Cornett of Worthington, Ohio. August 1, 2007 marked the 10-

year anniversary of Mr. Cornett's leadership as Executive Director of the Ohio Optometric Association.

Beginning his career serving as a Clinical Specialist for the U.S. Army, Mr. Cornett has spent more than three decades working in leadership roles. His continued enthusiasm about eye and vision issues, disease and care is admirable.

During his tenure, the Ohio Optometric Association has enjoyed phenomenal success. The Association has increased their resources, public health initiatives and advocacy for expanding patient access to services and promoting the importance of a lifetime of comprehensive eye care. Mr. Cornett has spent 10 years dedicated to the profession of optometry and ensuring the care of patients. The Ohio Optometric Association is fortunate to have the leadership and enthusiasm of a director like Mr. Cornett.

I am honored to have this opportunity to recognize Mr. Cornett for his dedication and hard work over his 10 years of service and wish him the best for the next 10 years.

HONORING THE ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Alameda Creek Alliance on its tenth anniversary. The Alameda Creek Alliance is a non-profit community watershed restoration group within California's 13th congressional district. It was formed in 1997, after steelhead trout in the Central California Coast were listed as a threatened species. The organization has spent the last decade working to restore runs of steelhead trout and salmon to the Alameda Creek watershed, the largest tributary to southern San Francisco Bay.

The Alliance is working with a consortium of a dozen local, State and Federal water supply and land management agencies on projects to restore native fish habitat in Alameda Creek. The efforts of the Alliance have resulted in the removal of four obsolete dams from Alameda Creek and the construction of two fish ladders to allow fish to migrate to suitable habitat upstream. Another dam removal and construction of four additional fish ladders are in the planning stages. These projects will make up to 20 miles of Alameda Creek accessible to ocean-run fish for the first time in over half a century.

The Alameda Creek Alliance, which has grown to an organization of 1,400 members, has organized over 70 local and regional conservation and fly-fishing groups in support of the Alameda Creek restoration. The Alliance educates the residents of Fremont, Union City, Newark, Sunol, Pleasanton, Dublin and Livermore, California about watershed restoration and protection of endangered species and their habitats. The Alliance also trains volunteers for fish rescues, creek cleanups, creek monitoring, and assisting biologists in gathering scientific data essential to steelhead restoration. The Alameda Creek restoration efforts have been featured in over 200 newspaper articles over the past decade.

I congratulate the Alameda Creek Alliance on their 10 years of exemplary service to our

community and send best wishes for continued success.

INTRODUCING MEMORIAL MARKER BILL

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce a bill that would allow family members to request a memorial marker for placement in a national cemetery in order to commemorate servicemembers buried overseas.

As Members of Congress, we all have the great opportunity to hear stories of duty and honor from our constituents. I had such a chance right after Memorial Day in 2004 when I received a letter from Henry Stad, a resident of Rhode Island and a World War II veteran. Mr. Stad asked that I sponsor a bill that would allow family members of servicemembers that were killed in action and buried overseas to be able to request a burial plaque to be set in a family burial plot in the United States. I was happy to look into this request from a man who gave so much to his country.

Madam Speaker, as you know, the United States currently has 24 permanent overseas burial grounds that are the final resting place for nearly 125,000 of the brave men and women who died serving our country. These sites are the responsibility of the American Battle Monuments Commission and are a wonderful tribute to those who sacrificed for our Nation. However, the Department of Veterans Affairs maintains that because these graves can be visited, there is no need to provide families at home with a memorial marker for their deceased loved ones buried there.

As a result, I introduced a bill that will help families memorialize those who died in service to our country and are buried overseas. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, those servicemembers whose remains are classified as "unavailable for burial" are eligible for government-provided memorial markers or headstones. While this classification includes those whose remains have not been recovered or who were buried at sea, there is one glaring exception to this definition—those who died fighting for freedom abroad and were laid to rest there.

Families are proud of these courageous men and women who answered the call to protect our country and then paid the ultimate price. Unfortunately, for many families, a trip abroad to visit their loved ones is not possible due to finances or old age. A memorial marker is a way to keep the memory of their loved one alive, while also teaching younger generations about sacrifice. We should not deny the families of these courageous men and women the ability to obtain memorial markers when we already do it for so many others. To correct this, my legislation will add overseas burials to the VA's "unavailable for burial" classification and finally let these men and women be memorialized by their families here at home.

Madam Speaker, this legislation will help memorialize those that accepted the call to protect our country.